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1962/10/28

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

EXCISE

October 28, 1962

SECRET, OADR

TO : The Secretary
FROM : INR - Roger Hilsman

SUBJECT: Khrushchev's Dispatch of Kuznetsov for the Cuban Negotiations in New York

I attach the most recent biographic sketch of V. V. Kuznetsov, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, whom Khrushchev is sending to New York.

We would add to this sketch the observation that while there have been reports of friction between Khrushchev and Kuznetsov, Khrushchev has frequently expressed his admiration and respect for the First Deputy Foreign Minister. Kuznetsov's Party history is certainly more impressive than Gromyko's and, in particular, Kuznetsov has been part of the fringes of the central leadership where Gromyko has been a bureaucrat distinctly outside the top leadership group.

We have no knowledge of where, or indeed whether, Kuznetsov may have lined up in any intramural Kremlin disputes, and we think it is a safe assumption that he was selected for the mission by Khrushchev as the best available man.

Thus while Kuznetsov, like every Soviet representative, will obviously have tight reins on him, the fact that he was dispatched, together with his long-standing Party history, indicates that he will be coming to negotiate rather than merely to posture.

Attachment

Biographic sketch of V. V. Kuznetsov

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IS/FPC/CDR SECRET Date: June 16, 1992

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EXCISE INR paper

KUZNETSOV, Vasil'iy Vasil'yevich

USSR

V. V. Kuznetsov, a versatile and high-ranking Soviet official, has been First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA) since 1955 and is currently head of the Soviet delegation to the 17-Nation Geneva Disarmament Conference. A member of the Central Committee of the CPSU since 1939, he was once a member of its Organizational Bureau (Orgburo) (1946-52) and of its Presidium (October - March 1953).

Kuznetsov was born near Gor'kiy RSFSR in 1901. Starting as a worker in the steel industry, he later became a metallurgical engineer (steel is still his favorite conversational topic). In the early thirties he studied in the United States, where he acquired a Master's Degree from Carnegie Institute of Technology and working experience at the Ford plant in Detroit. Later, an American labor leader was to remark that Kuznetsov "knows more about American industry and labor than most Americans."

During the war Kuznetsov served as a deputy chairman of the USSR State Planning Commission (Gosplan) and then, in 1944, was named Chairman of the Soviet trade union movement. In 1953, following the death of Stalin, he joined the MFA as a deputy minister, and was appointed Ambassador to the Chinese People's Republic (CPR). Kuznetsov spent about a year in Peiping, reportedly maintaining control of the Communist movement in Asia and negotiating early Soviet differences with Mao Tse-tung.

Kuznetsov has travelled frequently abroad and has attended a number of sessions of the UNGA as deputy chairman or chairman of the Soviet delegation. He accompanied Khrushchev to the CPR in 1958 and later that year served as chief of the Soviet delegation to the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. In May 1958, after attending the inauguration of President Frondizi in Argentina, he visited Uruguay, Mexico, and the United States. [In a private conversation with Ambassador Lodge, Kuznetsov made the familiar Soviet allegation that Latin America is a "private preserve" of the United States.] He also headed the Soviet delegation to the International Conference on Antarctica in Washington held in October 1959 and served as an advisor of the USSR delegation at the 1960 Paris Summit Conference.

Kuznetsov is highly respected by American officials as an adroit and intelligent exponent of Soviet policies, who combines an agreeable personality with a professional manner that includes harshness, vitriolic expression, and a determination to get things done. Ambassador Lodge once remarked that Kuznetsov was "by all odds superior" to any of the high ranking Soviet officials he had met at the UN. Reportedly there is friction between Kuznetsov and Khrushchev, but in his contacts with Westerners Kuznetsov gives the impression of being a man who possesses authority and is politically secure. He speaks English fluently.

16 October 1962

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